



2005 Annual Report

The vision of the Commission on Spanish Speaking Affairs is to promote the diverse interests of Hispanics in Michigan to have lives that are abundant with opportunities.



State of Michigan, Jennifer M. Granholm, Governor

José L.R.Reyna, Chairperson

George Fierro, Vice-Chairperson

Danette Duron-Willner, Secretary

Sergio Paneque, Trustee

Marylou Olivarez-Mason, Executive Director

Michigan Commission on Spanish Speaking Affairs
www.michigan.gov/cossa

About COSSA



On July 15, 1975, the Michigan Legislature and the Governor approved Public Act 164, which created the Michigan Commission on Spanish-Speaking Affairs and the Office on Spanish-Speaking Affairs. The Governor reinstated the COSSA Interagency Council per Executive Order 2003-18.

Commissioners are appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate. Commissioners are appointed for three year terms and may be reappointed.

The purpose of the Commission (COSSA) is to develop a unified policy and plan of action to serve the needs of Michigan's Hispanic people. The law directs the Commission to:

- Advise the Governor, the Legislature, and the office concerning the coordination and administration of state programs serving Hispanics.
- Make recommendations to the Governor and the legislature regarding changes in state programs, statutes, and policies.
- Advise the Governor and the Legislature of the nature, magnitude, and priorities of the problems concerning Hispanic people.
- Review and approve grants to be made from federal, state, or private funds which are administered by the office.
- Secure appropriate recognition of Hispanic accomplishments and contributions to the state.
- Review and approve the Annual Report prepared by the Office of Spanish-Speaking Affairs.



Strategic Plan



In 2004, COSSA began work on a revised five-year Strategic Plan. The plan was unveiled for community review and comment. The new Strategic Plan for 2005-2009 was adopted in August 2005.

Strategic Plan 2005-2009

focuses on four key areas:

Economic Development

Education

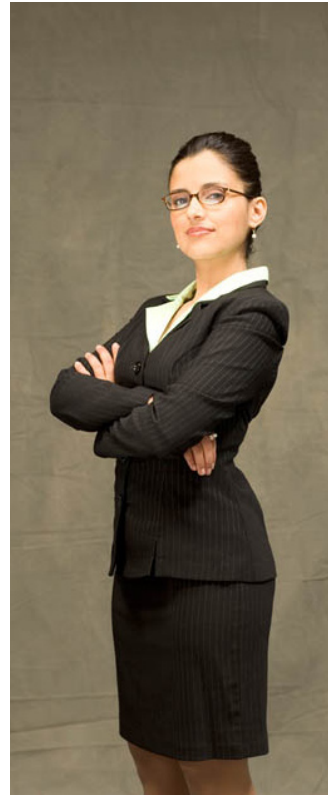
Leadership & Political Process

Legislative

The Strategic Plan identifies the areas of priorities and annual milestones as established by COSSA and provides focus on specific areas for the benefit for all of the Hispanic community in Michigan. However, the work of COSSA is not exclusive to the areas outlined in the Strategic Plan. On occasion issues will arise that will require the attention and action by COSSA and COSSA stands prepared to address issues that impact Hispanics in Michigan.

COSSA aims to be a catalyst for positive change and seeks to work proactively with local and state leaders in shaping policies and programs with the goal of improving the quality of life for Hispanics in Michigan. The **Strategic Plan 2005-2009** will serve as a guide for the important work of the Commission.

COSSA will work partnership with the Office of Migrant Affairs and other members of the COSSA Interagency Council. COSSA was also instrumental in establishing the Michigan Hispanic Senior Citizens Coalition and will endeavor to foster a strong relationship between the two organizations.



Strategic Plan Priority Areas and Milestones

Economic Development

COSSA and the Economic Development Committee will work to ensure:

- *COSSA will have actively participated in a successful business forum;*
- *Business opportunities and project bid postings on the COSSA website; and*
- *Key relationships with businesses and associations in the public and private arena will be established and will be cultivated regarding the possibility of having procurement workshops to provide opportunities for Hispanic business owners to find out what is need to build and win contracts and projects.*

Education

COSSA and the Education Committee will work to assist in the increase of Michigan Hispanic:

- *High school graduation rates;*
- *College enrollment; and*
- *College graduation.*

Leadership and Political Process

COSSA and the Leadership and Political Process Committee will work to ensure an *increased number of Hispanic leaders at all levels of public and private sectors in Michigan.*

Legislative

COSSA and the Legislative Committee will work to ensure legislation that:

- *Positively impacts the Hispanic community will be approved; and*
- *Negatively impacts the Hispanic community will be defeated.*



2005 COMMISSIONERS

José L.R. Reyna, *Chairperson*

George Fierro, *Vice-Chair*

Danette Duron-Willner, *Secretary*

Sergio Paneque, *Trustee*

Nelida Bravo, Oakland County

Enrique Carrillo, Oakland County

Debra Rivera-Ehrmann, Oakland County

Arminda Garcia, Genesee County

Belda Garza, Wayne County

Dan Inquilla, Allegan County

Frances Diaz Plets, Macomb County

Esmeralda Rodriguez, Oceana County

Henry Sanchez, Ionia County

Luisa Schumacher, Kent County

Ricardo Verdoni, Saginaw County

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